

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 013415

NODIS

WHITE HOUSE FOR BRZEZINSKI ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT JERUSALEM 135 ACTION SECSTATE WASHDC 17 JAN 78

QUOTE: S E C R E T JERUSALEM 135

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, PEPR, XF

SUBJ: THE FUTURE OF THE PLO

REF: BEIRUT 185

1. I BELIEVE AMBASSADOR PARKER HAS PERFORMED VALUABLE SERVICE BY UNDERLINING PLO'S POTENTIAL IN THE MIDDLE EAST COMPLEX (REFTEL).

2. FOR VARIETY OF REASONS, PLO IS CURRENTLY NOT IN POSITION TO TAKE PART IN NEGOTIATING PROCESS. HOWEVER, READING PLO OUT OF NEGOTIATIONS IS NOT THE SAME THING AS READING THEM OUT OF MIDDLE EAST POLITICS AS FAR AS ARAB/ISRAELI

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CONFLICT CONCERNED. PLO DOES HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO AFFECT PALESTINIAN ATTITUDES TOWARD WHATEVER AGREEMENTS ARE REACHED AND THEREBY INFLUENCE A NUMBER OF ARAB GOVERNMENTS AS WELL. THE VIABILITY OF AGREEMENTS, IF ACHIEVED, IS LIKELY TO BE FRAGILE UNDER THE BEST OF CIRCUMSTANCES AND ACTIVE, ALL-OUT PLO OPPOSITION (AS DISTINGUISHED FROM THAT OF THE HABBASHES, HADADS, ET AL) COULD PROVE FATAL.

3. IF, AS AMBASSADOR PARKER SUGGESTS, WE HOLD OUT HOPE TO PLO MODERATES THAT AT SOME STAGE THEY WILL BE PERMITTED TO PARTICIPATE IN NEGOTIATIONS, THIS WILL HELP CREATE CONDITIONS FOR EVOLUTION IN DIRECTION OF EVENTUAL COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT.

4. NO PERSON OR ORGANIZATION OTHER THAN ARAFAT AND THE PLO CAN CLAIM WITH ANY VALIDITY TO SPEAK FOR MAJORITY OF PALESTINIANS. THIS SITUATION MAY BE REGRETTABLE, BUT IT IS TRUE. THE PLO'S CURRENT POSITION EXPLAINS WHY NO WEST BANKER OF ANY STATURE (EXCEPT BETHLEHEM'S FREIJ) AND POLITICAL WEIGHT HAS PUBLICLY ENDORSED SADAT'S INITIATIVE.

5. I ALSO AGREE WITH AMBASSADOR PARKER THAT ISRAEL AND JORDAN, BETWEEN THEM, COULD FIND SOME WEST BANKERS WHO COULD BE PRESENTED AS NOMINALLY IN CHARGE OF WEST BANK AFFAIRS. THESE WOULD PROBABLY BE OF THE SAME CALIBER OF THE INDIVIDUALS WHO WENT TO ISMAILIA TO PLEDGE SUPPORT FOR SADAT AND WOULD MAKE IT ALL THE EASIER FOR THE PLO TO MUSTER OPPOSITION BOTH IN THE WEST BANK/GAZA AND IN THE IASPORA.

6. IF AGREEMENT CAN BE ACHIEVED ON A SET OF PRINCIPLES WHICH HOLDS OUT THE REALISTIC HOPE OF AN EVENTUAL END TO OCCUPATION TOGETHER WITH PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION IN THEIR OWN FUTURE, I DO NOT EXCLUDE THAT SOME REPUTABLE AND
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CAPABLE WEST BANK LEADERS WOULD HAVE THE COURAGE TO TAKE PART IN DETAILED NEGOTIATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION. FOR THIS TO HAPPEN, HOWEVER, THEY WOULD REQUIRE AT LEAST TACIT ACQUIESCENCE BY THE MODERATE PLO LEADERSHIP. SUCH PLO ACQUIESCENCE, TACIT OR OTHERWISE, IS NOT LIKELY TO BE FORTHCOMING IF THE PLO IS PUBLICLY DECLARED BY US TO BE IRRELEVANT TO ONGOING NEGOTIATING PROCESS.

7. IN SHORT, I WARMLY SUPPORT POINT AMBASSADOR PARKER MAKES PARA 9 REFTEL.

8. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH PASS OTHER AREA POSTS WHICH RECEIVED REFTEL.

NEWLIN

UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

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